

Committee, that would object to the Senator's amendment. I am put in the position of trying to secure some advice and counsel now from at least the ranking member of the Commerce Committee. So, we will be delayed for some time because he is in a conference, and we will have to try to reach him and see what we can do.

So, Mr. President, I have no alternative but to suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. PRESSLER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT 3063, AS MODIFIED

(Purpose: To modify the manager's amendment)

Mr. PRESSLER. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk to modify the manager's amendment. This amendment just changes one word, and it has been agreed to by both sides of the aisle.

I send the amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the pending amendment is set aside.

The amendment is so modified.

The amendment, as modified, is as follows:

On page 3 of the amendment, between lines 14 and 15, insert the following: "On page 311, line 16, insert 'reasonable' after 'a'."

Mr. PRESSLER. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

GOOD NEWS FOR ALASKANS

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to say this is a good day for my State of Alaska. This afternoon President Clinton signed legislation which lifts the ban on the export of Alaskan North Slope crude oil and authorizes the sale of the Alaska Power Administration.

Alaskans have been fighting for both of these provisions for more than 20 years. The ban on the export of our own oil was unjust and unconstitutional, as I have said here on the floor many times. Before today, Alaska was the only State prohibited from exporting its most valuable product. There is no ban on the sale of oil from Texas or the exporting of apples from Washington State. I see the distinguished occupant of the chair is from my southern neighboring State.

Today's action by the President lifts years of discrimination against Alaska, and I think it proves that perseverance can overcome bad policy. Lifting this

ban will promote domestic oil production, provide jobs, and make Alaska less dependent on foreign oil. The ban has had the unintended effect of actually threatening our energy security by discouraging further energy production in the south 48 and creating unfair hardships for a struggling oil industry in the United States.

Fundamentally, the existing export restriction distorts the crude oil markets in Alaska and on the west coast. The inability to export Alaskan North Slope crude oil depresses the open market price of Alaska North Slope crude on the west coast, which is essentially the only market for our oil. Some people will tell us that it makes no sense to lift the export ban while Congress is pursuing an effort to authorize oil exploration on Alaska's arctic coastal plain. And nothing could be further from the truth.

Lifting the export ban simply restores a true market price for Alaskan oil, and the west coast will still be the principle consumer of that product. What this new law does is allow an Alaskan product to be sold at a fair price, the same demand farmers in the Midwest make when they sell their crops or automakers in Detroit make when they sell their products.

The Department of Energy noted in a 1994 study of the export ban that the result of the export ban means "that the west coast generates the largest gross refiner margins in the world."

So what does this new law do? It puts fairness back into the economic system and removes an ugly vestige of protectionism.

One of the main reasons I have come to the floor is to congratulate the chairman of the Energy Committee, my colleague and good friend, Senator FRANK MURKOWSKI. I also congratulate Congressman DON YOUNG, chairman of the House Resources Committee. My two colleagues made great efforts to shepherd this bill through the legislative process.

Actually, Mr. President, I think the President signed the bill principally to help California because most of the jobs to be restored will be in California. And I do thank him and Energy Secretary O'Leary for their support of this bill.

The Department of Energy did issue a comprehensive report last year that proved once and for all that the ban on exporting Alaskan oil made no sense. Lifting that ban will create 25,000 jobs nationally, most of them in California, as I said, and could return substantial funds to the Nation and to the States of California and Alaska.

The sale of the Alaska Power Administration is another item, an item that I have worked on for more than two decades. During the Nixon administration, I introduced in the Senate the first bill to authorize the sale of this entity.

Today's actions restore some of the promise that was made when we obtained statehood for Alaskans. We al-

ways sought to be a full partner with other States. For too long, Alaska has been treated as a second-class citizen, and I think the export ban was one example. The refusal to pass the law to sell the Alaska Power Administration, as was requested by our citizens 20 years ago, is also an example of just holding up something that was good for Alaska because one Senator in the Congress opposed it.

I do believe that in a State where the Federal Government controls more than 70 percent of the land that we should have been able to export our oil as a marketable product. There would have been a great deal more demand for Alaska's oil exploration in the last period particularly since the discovery of oil on the North Slope. I think it was unfortunate that that was one of the provisions we had to agree to to obtain approval by Congress of the bill that gave us authority to grant the right-of-way for the Trans-Alaska Pipeline.

In my judgment, this has been a long time coming. There is still a long line of actions, Mr. President. The Alaskans have requested us to give them full rights of statehood, and I intend to come to the Senate and ask for those rights as the time goes by.

Thank you very much, Mr. President. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. PRESSLER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. PRESSLER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 5 minutes as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from South Dakota is recognized.

OPPOSED TO SENDING TROOPS

Mr. PRESSLER. Mr. President, I am opposed to sending troops to Bosnia based on the information I now have. I base that judgment, in part, on my own experience as a lieutenant in the Army in Vietnam many years ago. It has been my observation that our soldiers have a very hard time in a civil-war situation in another country, and that is because our soldiers are frequently used essentially as shields. We value human life so highly that we react very strongly to any body bags coming back or to any casualties, as we should.

There is probably no other country in the world that reacts to its soldiers being killed or captured as we do in the United States, and again, Mr. President, we should act that way. Any action by our soldiers will be shown on television in living color. If there are any funerals, they will be a nationwide event. U.S. soldiers become shields and hostages and symbols very quickly.

If we had a vital interest that we could accomplish there, I would be for